

CHRISTIANITY'S SUPREME ISSUES

A STUDY IN PERSPECTIVE

BY

T. H. P. SAILER

A new plan for the cooperative study
of six supreme needs of humanity, based
on Bishop Francis J. McConnell's book,
Human Needs and World Christianity,
and on the Report of the Jerusalem
Meeting, 1928

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CONTENTS

I. THE PLAN—A NEW METHOD

Selection of Chairmen	5
First Meeting of Chairmen	6
Recruiting the Groups	7
First Meeting of All the Groups	8
Meetings Preparatory to General Sessions	11
General Sessions of All the Groups	14
Subsequent Meetings of Groups Separately	16
Inter-Group Consultation	17
Practical Projects	18

II. THE MATERIAL

Introductory	22
Topics of the Course with Outlines and References	
Better Health	26
More Wealth	30
Sounder Knowledge	35
Larger Freedom	41
Closer Fellowship	46
The Vision of God	50

APPENDIX

Suggestions to Sub-Committee Members	54
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CHRISTIANITY'S SUPREME ISSUES

I. THE PLAN—A NEW METHOD

This plan differs in several particulars from that which has been generally followed in "Suggestions to Leaders."

1. It is less dependent on a single textbook. While it adopts the chapter headings of Bishop Francis John McConnell's book, *Human Needs and World Christianity*, as its main topics, it uses the book as a commentary together with other reference material.

2. Instead of a single leader for a course of meetings, it organizes six sub-committees, each to have charge of a session.

3. Instead of concentrating for the year on a single field or topic of missionary work, it considers simultaneously six large aspects which relate to the whole world, home and foreign.

4. Instead of regarding the general sessions as a culmination of the work, it considers them rather as episodes in an educational program.

5. It makes the sub-committees responsible for continued study and effort designed to secure for their respective subjects a more adequate place in the educational program and activity of the local church.

The plan as a whole is more extended in scope, more ambitious in aim, more elaborate in organization, than that of the ordinary discussion group. It should not be undertaken without careful study of what it demands. It may be that many communities had better not attempt it. On the other hand, it is open to modification. In some

cases it may be simplified by omitting topics; in some it may be strengthened by adding new features. It is not a set program to be followed out in detail in order to secure credit. It is only one of many possible ways of promoting missionary education in the church and making it fruitful. It should be used and revised in accordance with this aim.

The dictionary defines method as systematic procedure for the achievement of an end or purpose. Much of our so-called method in missionary discussion has been defective in that it has had only a dim consciousness of any large aims. We have been pushed from behind by the exigency of immediate needs, rather than held to a straight course by the vision of a definite outcome. Our groups have gathered for discussion rather than achievement. The mere consideration of the problems of the missionary enterprise has been counted upon to create interest which would find its own channels of self-expression. These hopes have sometimes been realized. Individuals have gained new insight and enthusiasm which has led to more effective service. On the other hand, much of the steam which has been generated has never done any work because it was not brought to bear on something specific. The results of many missionary discussion groups have been disappointingly small.

We need to develop a method with more systematic procedure and more definite purpose. Bishop McConnell's recent book, *Human Needs and World Christianity*, furnishes an excellent background and outlook for such a method. Its six chapters treat in succession: *Better Health, More Wealth, Sounder Knowledge, Larger Freedom, Closer Fellowship, The Vision of God*. These are objectives for all the world. It is proposed that our method

shall take for its aim *the integration of those objectives into the educational program of the local church.*

It is more than a coincidence that the first meaning of the word parochial given in the dictionary is "pertaining to a parish," and that the second meaning is "narrow-minded." The average church is entirely too much like a religious club whose main concern is its own welfare and internal efficiency. Christian loyalty is too often devotion to local ecclesiastical affairs or denominational standards, instead of to the broad claims of the kingdom of God. The educational curriculum of most churches does comparatively little to correct this tendency. Human needs as seen from the standpoint of world Christianity are treated only incidentally. No one would suppose, from an inspection of the subject matter commonly considered in religious education, that these needs were considered as supreme issues. To enlarge the perspective both of adult church members and the rising generation would be a great achievement, a blessing to the individual, the church, and the world.

In substance the plan is as follows:

1. Six chairmen are secured, each to organize a sub-committee which shall study and promote one of the issues presented in Bishop McConnell's book.
2. These chairmen are called together for full explanation of the plan, discussion of possible adaptations, and canvass and apportionment of persons available for committee membership.
3. Each chairman invites the members assigned him to join his group,¹ and makes arrangements for substitutes if any of them are unable or unwilling to serve.

¹ Since the word *sub-committee* is somewhat cumbersome, the word *group* will be used instead. The meeting of all the groups is the *general session*.

4. Each group meets to consider the plan in detail, select aspects of it for individual study, and outline an initial program for presentation to the other groups.

5. Groups study their respective assignments and investigate the needs of the church and community for further education on their subjects through study and practical effort.

6. Groups reconvene separately to set up and rehearse their programs. More than one meeting may be necessary for this.

7. A series of general sessions is held, at each of which one group presents its issue as a subject claiming large recognition in the educational program and activity of the church.

8. The groups continue to meet separately to plan for further study and for specific educational projects connected with their issues.

9. There are combined meetings of the groups to exchange ideas and correlate effort.

10. Individuals and groups undertake in cooperation with the local educational authorities projects to give the several issues the place they deserve in religious education.

The plan is therefore not a labor-saving contrivance nor a variation for the sake of mere novelty. It demands a fair-sized number of persons, able and willing to work and to report intelligently on their efforts. It is highly desirable that the pastor should be a member of one of the groups as a fellow-learner; also the director of religious education, if there is one, and those who are most intelligent and active in shaping the educational policies.

Note that the center of gravity is not in the general sessions, as is the case with the ordinary mission study class. These sessions serve a real purpose, but are properly only

episodes. They furnish practical motivation for the preparation of effective reports. Each group needs the stimulus of having to be ready at a definite date with an adequate presentation of its topic. The sense of fellowship with other groups, or even of friendly rivalry with them, will help in securing work from some who might otherwise not exert themselves. The general sessions will enable groups to test their ability to present their subjects in a way that commands attention and to obtain sympathetic criticism. The groups thereby publicly commit themselves to responsibility for accomplishment. They deepen their own interest by defending a cause, and they have an opportunity to infect others with their enthusiasm.

On the other hand, there is danger that our customary emphasis on meetings as ends in themselves, exercises which have served their purpose when they have attracted a creditable audience and held their attention, may become a stumbling block. It must be clearly understood that the general sessions are not swan songs, but rehearsals for action; not occasions for the laying down of arms with honorable discharge, but of girding for more efficient service.

The plan we propose may be considered a failure if it comes to an end with the termination of the general sessions, and if each group dissolves as soon as it has made its report.

The preceding steps will now be discussed in greater detail.

Selection of Chairmen

It is important that the chairmen should have qualities of leadership; that they should be persons who believe, with Mr. Dwight L. Moody, that "it is better to set ten men to work than to do the work of ten men." It is equally

important that they should be heartily committed to the plan. It would be fatal if they undertook their work without real enthusiasm. If suitable individuals are not available, it may be better to omit one or more of the issues. As early as possible, a copy of this pamphlet should be placed in the hands of each chairman.

First Meeting of the Chairmen

The need and value of some such plan should be discussed, together with any modifications or improvements. Support by the pastor, the director of religious education, and other leaders of the church will count for much at this stage. The chairmen should have a clear perspective of the function of each step, and should be helped to realize the importance of a long stern chase in education in order to give the church a world view of human needs. Not only will others be stunted and perhaps lost without our efforts, but we ourselves will become stunted and perhaps lost if we do not exert ourselves to help.

Each chairman should select by agreement one of the issues, and a list of members eligible for the different groups should then be gathered. Apportionment must be only tentative, as some may decline to serve and others may prefer membership in some other group. It is desirable that two persons besides the chairman should be secured for each committee, but three or more would be better.

Copies of *Suggestions to Sub-Committee Members*¹ should be provided for distribution, and ways of procuring a sufficient amount of reference material should be dis-

¹ These *Suggestions* appear in full in the Appendix to this pamphlet (see page 54), and have also been reprinted separately in leaflet form. It is very important that the chairmen secure enough copies to enable each group member to have one, inasmuch as the leaflet explains the scope of the plan, presents the main questions for study, and furnishes references on each topic.

cussed. Bishop McConnell's book will naturally be used widely for reference. Since it is addressed to those of a more thoughtful type, it will need to be supplemented by more popular presentations, as well as by further facts and statistics. For serious study the eight-volume report of the Jerusalem Meeting should be accessible; also *A Faith for the World*, by William Paton; *The World Mission of Christianity*, a twenty-five cent pamphlet which contains the findings of the Jerusalem delegates; and Basil Mathews' *Roads to the City of God*, which offers an interesting sketch of the conference and its significance. More specific references are given later in the sections dealing with the several main topics.

Chairmen cannot begin too soon to read up on these subjects. They can hardly hope to interest others in issues of which they themselves are ignorant. They should separate with a feeling that if a considerable amount of work is being demanded of each of them, it at least promises to be invested at a higher rate of interest than much of the service rendered to the church. At all stages the point must be strongly stressed that the primary function of chairmen is not to set up a report for the general session, but to secure continuous study in order to give one of the supreme issues of Christianity a new place in the educational program of the church.

Recruiting the Groups

It would be remarkable if the membership of the groups worked out just as planned in the preceding conference. Further consultation between chairmen will probably be necessary before all the groups are sufficiently recruited and balanced. In inviting persons to join, care must be taken not to demand too much.

The defective education which most of us have received

has created a tendency to think of study as a committing to memory of something in a book for future recitation. It is important that group members should understand that they are responsible not merely for a contribution to a program, but for learning all they can about a great issue and the need for it in the educational curriculum of the church and community. They should try to become enthusiastic about their topics so that they will really desire to interest others, and should also, by conversation and observation, discover whether children and adults know what they ought to know. Some persons will be stimulated far more by practical investigation than by reading.

Some may be only stimulated by the prospect of continued study and work; others who would simply refuse to sign up for so much, may have their interest aroused more than they anticipate by fellowship in the groups. It should be understood that each group is at liberty to strengthen itself by enlisting additional members temporarily or permanently. Local physicians, social workers, or other specialists may be drawn upon for advice.

First Meeting of the Groups

This should be held at least two weeks before the report to the general session, but preferably should convene much earlier in order to give plenty of time for investigation and study. The groups who are to report first must therefore organize and get to work at once. The others will do well not to postpone but to begin without delay the study of issues so rich in content. If the members of each group can be started reading and thinking on the subject even before the meeting, discussion will be more to the point.

The amount of general explanation necessary will depend on the understanding of the plan by the members and their attitude towards it. It will be necessary to keep in

mind the tendency of the average church member to think of meetings as ends in themselves. All should understand that the report to the other groups is only an important preliminary.

Each chairman should bring all the explanatory and reference material available, together with slips indicating where more is to be found. Some persons are quite able and willing to hunt in libraries, discover the best books, pick out the most useful material, and present it in effective form. Others will have to have specific directions given them, or references actually placed in their hands.

It will be well to impress on members: First, that there are five other sub-committees undertaking similar tasks; the sense of cooperation and desire not to fall behind is a great stimulus to some persons. Second, that the plan has been discussed and approved by the pastor and some leading members of the church. Third, that study will introduce them not only to Bishop McConnell's book, but to discussions on the Jerusalem Meeting and a survey of the subjects considered there. Fourth, that the plan is a new experiment so that it is always open to criticism and improvement. Fifth, that the plan is not a mere stunt but an opportunity (a) to form intelligent convictions on a great subject; (b) to discuss these with others; (c) to make what is gained useful to others; (d) to secure expanding achievement by incorporating the issues into the continuing educational program of the local church.

The issue assigned to the group may now be discussed to discover any relevant information or interest which the members may have. Each of the six topics covers a tremendous field which would afford scope for study for several years. Since only limited aspects can be dealt with, it will be well to select those which appeal most to the sub-committee members, supplementing in such a way as to

make an effective presentation. While the report itself will serve as an initial stimulus, all should understand that they are at work on a subject and an educational campaign rather than a program for a meeting. The latter is only an appetizer for continuous effort.

Since in many cases all the groups will not come together preparatory to the first general session, it may be difficult for each to furnish the members of the other groups information necessary for intelligent preparation. The *Suggestions to Sub-Committee Members*, which should be distributed to all taking part in the project, contain a general outline of treatment, with a few references for each session. This outline, focussing attention first on the importance of the issue and its demands, next on the responsibility of the Christian church for it, and finally on the educational measures for meeting this responsibility—contains nothing that could well be omitted, and yet is sufficiently broad to afford scope for considerable variety of treatment. Members should therefore be urged to keep the outline before them in their study, and to relate the material they gather to one or another of its heads.

The reference material should be distributed according to the interests of members, and ways of obtaining more discussed. Investigation by conversation and observation should be recommended. On most of the issues charts or posters will be a great help. Statistics for the former should be furnished or sources indicated. The possibility of enrolling additional members in the group, or of securing temporary help from outsiders, should be considered. Originality in planning should be encouraged, provided the aim of the whole project is thereby promoted.

In some cases it may be profitable to block out the program for the general session pretty definitely at this meet-

ing. In others it may be evident that some time must be spent in gathering material before the form of its presentation can be determined. In the latter case it may be necessary to have two or more meetings of the group before the general session. Care must be taken not to dampen the interest of members by overloading them with work, but, on the other hand, the value of the results sought for should be kept before them in such a way as to arouse the maximum of effort.

It is hoped that the experiences of study, investigation, and the presenting of the issue to others will stimulate initiative, not only along the lines suggested in this pamphlet but in other lines. Any modification of or supplement to the plan here proposed is desirable if it achieves the aim more effectively. Chairmen are urged to be on the lookout for new ideas and methods, to suggest them to other chairmen, and to report successful experiments to the Missionary Education Movement.

Meetings Preparatory to General Sessions

The function of subsequent conferences of the group is to rehearse the program for the general session. If any of the general sessions have already been held when the group meets, it will be well to begin by reviewing them, and discussing their strong and weak features from the standpoint of their ultimate aim. Did they effectively promote their purpose of winning for their issue an adequate place in the educational program of the church, or did they merely send their hearers away with the feeling that one more missionary meeting had been attended?

In setting up the program the function of each part must be clearly appreciated. How can we help those present to form intelligent and deep convictions on the importance of the issue? How can we help them to realize its just

demands? How can we help them to a sense of their personal responsibility as members of the Christian church? How can we stimulate their enthusiasm for an effective educational campaign?

The group will need to keep these practical objectives constantly in the focus of their attention. Few characteristics of human nature are more remarkable than the facility with which it loses sight of its major purposes. The preacher, the teacher, the administrator, the builder of programs, each speedily becomes so immersed in details that he forgets what the details are intended to achieve. With eyes fixed on the bow of the boat, he neglects to look up to the stars to get his bearings. How many programs we have heard presented, made up of exercises all fairly interesting but altogether lacking in a unified purpose and drive, any one of which could be eliminated without essential loss and some of which would be positively good ridance.

To avoid this the group must weigh carefully the comparative contribution of every proposed item, omitting those which do little or nothing to realize some main aim, revising others to increase their momentum, and arranging all so as to cover systematically each objective. "What are we trying to accomplish?" "Is this feature worth the time it will take?" are the questions which should constantly be asked.

The group now proceeds to take account of stock. The various members may be asked to report on their study and investigation. Against the background of the amount of time available, exercises should be selected and arranged. The major desideratum is not to work in somehow everything that anyone has been able to gather together, but to decide how the objectives of the session can

best be realized. Certain facts should be placed at the disposal of the other groups. Some of these facts may be most effective in logical statements, some in narrative or description to stir imagination, and some in the form of charts. Personal testimony as to what has been discovered by investigation should be especially effective. On the other hand, those of the other groups to whom the material is presented should be given opportunity to react on the basis of their general knowledge, of their reading of the textbook or other references, and of the information just laid before them. Where it is practical to get assignments into their hands in advance, more specific questions for discussion may be suggested, together with other reference material known to be accessible. Those who attend the general sessions should assemble, not to listen to a program, but to cooperate in a discussion.

It is highly desirable that the general session should last more than an hour. An hour and a half or two hours would be none too long. If it is impossible to secure more than a single hour, features that contribute less to the main aims, even though representing earnest and intelligent study by particular members, must be regretfully omitted. The point should be stressed that all this material may be useful in the subsequent educational campaign, even if it cannot be placed on exhibit at the general session.

A tentative timetable should be made out, and each member who presents a statement or conducts an exercise should be urged to practise it within the time limits. On general principles all members of the group should have some participation. The value to them of taking part should be considered. On the other hand, if members differ markedly in ability, it will not be necessary to insist that all should have an equally responsible part. The group

must use its judgment to decide whether a third conference is advisable to complete the setup.

General Sessions of All the Groups

At each of the general sessions there should be a secretary appointed to record the transactions for future reference, including, of course, points of interest brought out in the discussions. It may help to have a critic to note constructive suggestions of methods for the benefit of subsequent sessions. The whole outlook should be towards the future, with primary effort for broadening and deepening interest, and a desire to revise procedure and devise new ways of getting results.

The first thing is to enlist for the undertaking the support and cooperation of everyone present. Many dismal failures occur at this point. The chairman opens with a prayer for general guidance and then announces an exercise, leaving it to the hearers to infer the intention of the latter. The first speaker proceeds to get something off his chest and sits down with visible relief. The chairman next calls for discussion, ignoring the fact that those present have not the slightest motive given them for discussing anything.

The business of the chairman is to help all present to attain the greatest mutual profit. His group has given some weeks of study to a highly important subject. It wishes to lay information and tentative conclusions before the other groups for their sympathetic and constructive criticism, and to help them in forming intelligent convictions. The considerations that should control selection of material are: (1) How may our presentation be enriched and balanced by the contributions of the others present? (2) How may we help them to reach for themselves such clear and deep convictions as are warranted on this issue?

The chairman should therefore begin by stating clearly the purpose of the meeting, inviting cooperation and suggestions at every stage; indicating that his group, on the one hand, desires the contributions of the whole gathering and their support in such conclusions as may be agreed upon, and, on the other, hopes to contribute to their outlook by presenting the results of its study. He may then introduce a statement of the importance of the issue under discussion. This should lead everyone to realize the large significance of the subject for the welfare of the world and the educational program of the church. This is propaganda in its best sense, without the insincerity or exaggeration which would ultimately defeat its own ends—merely a sober and earnest setting forth of facts which every intelligent Christian must admit. Unless the opening minutes of the session succeed in generating momentum and giving it direction, all proceedings that follow will be severely handicapped.

If the group proposes to limit discussion to some particular phases of the main issue, it will be well to post questions on the blackboard so that all may understand just what matters are before the house. Summaries of conclusions will also be helpful. The chairman should indicate the bearing of each exercise and hold those who participate to the point in a spirit of cooperation. Digressions should be judged on their merits. Occasionally it may be well worth while to spend a few minutes on some fresh suggestions. Diversions by those unable to think consecutively should be courteously ruled out of order.

Since the main objective of the general session is to arouse interest and aid in giving the issue in question a large place in the curriculum of the church, there should be a strong appeal for further study of it and spread of

information in every way possible. Specific projects for meeting community needs should be presented, and the most urgent world needs demanding support indicated. Naturally, the primary responsibility for responding to these appeals will fall upon the group in charge of it, but the cooperation of all should be solicited.

An important function of the general session is to circulate literature. Books and pamphlets should be on hand and should be advertised as attractively as possible. Manifold list of references on the issue will also help. The effort should be to send everyone away with a realization of past neglect and future opportunity, a desire to know more and to awaken the interest of others.

Subsequent Meetings of Groups Separately

In some cases the groups may reconvene soon after making their reports, to plan further action. From the great wealth of material which could not be treated at the general session they may make up several similar programs to present to various organizations of the church. Each member should become an enthusiastic specialist on the issue assigned to him or her, with the resolve to be its active promoter. Individuals should work out talks or papers or charts, and should undertake to read a number of the best books on their particular subject. Some may have ability to work out short courses for children, young people, or adults. All should plan projects for meeting local needs and study the agencies most worthy of support which are promoting their respective issues in all the world. It will be profitable for each to face at stated intervals the question: What have I accomplished for my issue that I would not have done if I had not been a member of this group?

Inter-Group Consultation

Meetings for consultation should be held as there is need for them. In some instances a gathering of all the groups may be desirable at the very outset in order to develop interest through contagion. Explanation of the plan and an inspirational address might be followed by the first session of the groups meeting separately. After the general sessions are over, another joint meeting might take place for inspirational purposes. In other cases it may be hard to find time for joint group meetings. But it is important that at least representatives of the different groups should get together to exchange ideas and plan a correlated campaign. Those in charge of the various educational organizations of the church should be invited to attend, and the services of the groups offered to them.

At this point some real problem may emerge. There are churches with large hospitality for volunteer effort, where anyone willing to contribute an attempt at edification is welcome. There are others for whom the ways of the past have a halo of sanctity, and who resist anything that savors of novelty. Some churches are loaded with programs to the breaking point, and must dislodge something already undertaken in order to admit a new feature. Others, while traditional in content, are fairly efficient from the standpoint of method, and may decline any proposals that seem lacking in technique.

It may be quite true that the issues which the groups have been studying are very inadequately represented in the church curriculum, and that both children and adults would be more useful Christians if they learned about these things. Theoretically, it ought to be a great blessing to any church to have a score or two of intelligent members so much interested in the human needs of the world that they want

to share their knowledge with others. But some of us can probably imagine places where we would not receive much encouragement from those in charge of religious education.

Such situations demand tact. In any event, friendly consultation is in order and may help to avoid friction. A movement representing half a dozen groups which as a result of study have arrived at real convictions, ought to have weight. If they can make a good case for the issues, they may obtain assurance for the coming year if not for the current one. It may be that in order to do effective work they will require several months for preparation.

Practical Projects

These are the real fruit of the undertaking. What does it profit if we have able chairmen, responsive groups, hard study, interesting general sessions, careful carrying out of all the suggestions up to this point, and nothing further is done? "To know good and to do it not is sin." We organize our work and promote our study, not in order to make members of groups sealed depositories of information, but that they may become active agents in educating the church.

It is desirable that the group members should face their own responsibilities before beginning to educate others. The latter work will be far more effective if based on personal experience.

Practical projects are of two kinds, those permitting direct contacts, and those which may be executed by proxy. Both afford unlimited scope. All about us there are demands for personal helpfulness which Christian people should be the first to meet. Most of us are greatly restricted in our contacts by social, economic, educational, or even religious barriers. Our daily routine and the tastes we have cultivated throw us into certain groups which supply

the great bulk of our associations. American community life in small towns and great cities suffers greatly because Christians who have been commissioned to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world do not mix sufficiently with those who need help. The bulk of effort in the Christian church is spent on internal organization rather than on influencing surroundings.

We need therefore just such an incentive as this course aims to provide in the study of our communities, to determine what are their problems connected with better health, more wealth, sounder knowledge, larger freedom, closer fellowship, and the vision of God. Especially we ought to cross the boundaries of race and class with a desire for mutual acquaintance. Most of us have no difficulty whatever in discovering improvements to institute in our own households. If we could view our larger surroundings in the same interested way, we should find no end of scope for effort.

These first-hand contacts are personally stimulating and are essential for our best development. They cover, however, only a very small part of our responsibilities. Much that needs to be done even in our own communities demands organization and expert service. We must discharge a large part of our obligations by proxy. The necessity for this becomes more clear when we look out over the world. It would be ideal if resources were so evenly distributed that each locality could look after its own needs. As a matter of fact, some places have one hundredfold the resources of others. Therefore we must export aid. No Christian responsibilities are more difficult to estimate accurately than these. Imaginations are weak, so that it is hard to realize conditions that are ten thousand miles away. Prejudices are strong, so that we fail to sense our obligations

to those of other races. Appeals come to us in remote, impersonal terms. As a result, most of us do far less than we should, certainly in proportion to what we devote to ourselves. To keep a true perspective and just sense of relative human needs is one of the supreme tasks of the Christian.

All our study should reach out into this active service. Merely to pass along knowledge is not sufficient. A self-contained community for mutual edification would be as bad as the desert island community whose inhabitants supported themselves by taking in each other's washing.

On the other hand, intelligent direction of effort and the disposition to expend it call for study. The groups should plan a systematic educational campaign in the church. What they can do will depend upon the character and content of their study and investigation, their own abilities, and the needs and opportunities of the local situation. The simplest types of projects would be presentations of facts illustrating present conditions. Charts or posters would help to make these much more effective. Sunday school classes or departments, young people's or adult organizations, might welcome such statements as a supplement to subjects being studied. The church should always have before it the great facts of world need as to health, wealth, education, freedom, fellowship, and evangelization. A similar project would be a description of some situation in the world today, presented so as to stir the imagination, or a narrative of some incident or contribution of an individual or organization. Material along these lines that has been found inspiring should be made available to others. Some group members will be competent to deliver effective talks combining these features. A whole group may set up a program to occupy one or more meetings.

Still more useful would be a systematic short course

worked out and led by someone with the requisite ability. There is a trend in religious education today towards elective courses for young people and adults. Groups often meet during Lent or at other times for a brief series. Even in the Sunday school, teachers are substituting projects of their own for quarterlies or textbooks that are found unsatisfactory. In such cases a short course on one or more great world needs would be right to the point.

Persons who feel unable to address audiences may organize reading circles or distribute books and pamphlets. They may organize an exhibit of charts and posters which can be used repeatedly and will probably be remembered much longer than the ordinary address. They may arrange trips to discover conditions.

None of these forms of service need be restricted to the congregation to which the groups belong. In many localities churches are very unevenly supplied with workers. Those which are better provided should be willing to pool resources. Interchange of effort should be more general than it is. Many persons who fail to find adequate scope for service in their own church may be of real help elsewhere. The responsibilities that face us are the task of the whole Christian church, and the whole church must be mobilized to meet them.

II. THE MATERIAL

INTRODUCTORY

The following sections suggest some of the topics that might be taken up under each of the six main headings of this study in preliminary preparation and in the presentation to other groups.

The first aim in dealing with a group should be to arouse clear and deep convictions as to the importance of the issue. A natural method would be to begin by summing up the loss occasioned in the world today by the neglect of this issue, a loss which usually falls most heavily on those least able to bear it. Health, wealth, knowledge, freedom, fellowship, vision, are all inadequately and unevenly distributed among mankind. We who are privileged are likely to fail to realize the extent to which others are deprived of these blessings. We need to face the facts.

It is well to take up first a study of local conditions and those accessible communities where special needs exist. This will help to make the issues concrete and practical. Supplementary reading should be suggested to guide this investigation and make it more significant. A survey of national conditions should follow, noting what needs are most acute and why, and the fact that recent changes are operating to make our social and religious problems more difficult. Members should be encouraged to pursue any topics which may especially interest them, such as conditions among Negroes, employment for women, rural communities, the idle rich, etc. Those without particular interests should be assigned topics on which investigation is practicable and attractive reference material accessible.

Conditions among the backward nations of the earth should receive special attention. While recognizing sympathetically the fine qualities of these peoples, we must admit that the poverty and illiteracy of their masses, to mention nothing more, have deprived them of many privileges and complicated the problems of their progress. Without great care on our part, Western civilization may become a liability to these peoples rather than an asset.

Studies of constructive effort will have inspirational value. Attention should be directed to the accomplishments of individuals or organizations in world uplift, and the response to opportunities of individual lives or communities.

All the groups should be urged to sidetrack other reading as much as possible during the course, in order to concentrate on their respective issues. From the first the practical uses of the study should be kept in mind. Suggestions as to projects are always in order. The more detailed discussion of action will naturally come after the importance of the issue is more fully realized. The members should consider themselves as having been designated, by virtue of their study, trustees for practical accomplishment. They should organize plans for direct help and for the effective education of the church.

These subjects have close relationships, with many sub-topics in common. It will be better to treat the more important of these topics twice, from different angles, rather than to omit them. Some of the overlappings are as follows:

Better Health overlaps with More Wealth in that poverty affects health; with Sounder Knowledge in that health education, sex education, research, and mental hygiene promote health; with Larger Freedom in that industrial and social conditions and political oppression affect health; with Closer Fellowship in that race discrimination may

affect health; with the Vision of God in that health has a place in the ideal life.

More Wealth overlaps with Knowledge in that vocational education and research promote wealth, and poverty hinders opportunities for study; with Freedom in that low wages and economic imperialism affect freedom; with Fellowship in that class consciousness and race antagonisms are largely based on economic causes, and that relations to nationals and to other churches are often prejudiced by economic differences; with Vision in that both poverty and wealth often handicap Christian development.

Sounder Knowledge overlaps with Freedom in that underprivileged groups are afforded less educational opportunity, that classes are educated differently, and that social revolt is often caused by demand for new experiences; with Fellowship in that education is needed to promote international, interracial and interclass goodwill; with Vision in that religious education is needed for Christian development.

Larger Freedom overlaps with Fellowship in that industrial, political and social disability will be removed by closer fellowship, while elements hindering the demand for larger freedom may obstruct it; with Vision in that the denial of desirable freedom hinders religious development.

Closer Fellowship overlaps with Vision in that it promotes the vision of God.

The references which accompany each subject constitute a very small part of those that might easily be mentioned. It was felt that lists should not be so long as to be confusing, but that they should afford some suggestion for the study of a variety of sub-topics. Moreover, except where large libraries are within reach, a portion of each list will probably not be obtainable. Each leader should

therefore (1) look over his list with care and select from it what would seem to be an adequate working book shelf ; (2) discover whether the references are accessible in public or private libraries ; (3) supplement from other references on the list or from other available sources ; (4) have on hand, to be distributed at the first meeting of the group, these references or instructions how to obtain them. While many groups may be able to consult only a few references, the value of the project will be greatly increased by thoughtful collateral reading.

TOPICS OF THE COURSE

With Outlines and References

BETTER HEALTH

Purpose. To discover to what extent health conditions are short of ideal all over the world, to learn of preventive measures, and the responsibility of the Christian church for improving conditions.

Some persons consider health a more or less secular subject. They think that the physical should not be placed on the same level with the spiritual. The Jerusalem Meeting did not make this one of the main issues to which it gave its attention. But—

1. This issue was evidently of large importance in the mind of Christ, as is seen from his works of healing, the story of the Good Samaritan, and the parable in *Matt.* 25:31 ff. Christ did not consider that physical ills were to be let alone as the will of God.

2. There is in the world today a tremendous amount not only of physical pain but of inefficiency resulting from ill health. Individuals are unable to render the service they otherwise might. They are a tax on their families, and a loss to the organizations with which they are connected. The amount of loss due to temporary absence from work, premature death, and lessened efficiency, has been estimated at three billion dollars per annum in the United States by Davis and Barnes in *Introduction to Sociology* (page 736), and by Dublin in *Health and Wealth* at twice this amount. About half of this loss is preventable. We

must add the money spent by individuals and institutions in efforts to aid the restoration of health. While illness may sometimes be a means of grace, on the other hand it may also have unfavorable effect on the patients themselves or on those taxed with their care. Children are frequently deprived of opportunities for development, either by their own illness or by the illness or disability of their parents.

The burden of ill health is especially borne by those without knowledge of hygiene or sanitation or diet, under-nourished, oppressed by superstition or evil social customs, engaged in injurious occupations, forced to live in unfavorable surroundings, too poor to obtain medical aid or other means of building up health.

There should be investigation of local health conditions, knowledge and practice of sanitation and hygiene, and location of the most urgent needs. The information and interest of church members on this subject should be canvassed.

The backward regions of the world and the less favored races and classes in our own country come under this head. Apart from anything that could be called illness, multitudes are far below their maximum efficiency on account of inadequate physical development. Many whose opportunities are normal, lower or waste their physical vitality from lack of exercise or over-exercise, unwise diet, ignorance of sex hygiene, use of drugs, stimulants, or narcotics, disregard of hygiene and sanitation in other ways. There is also the factor of unnecessary mental abnormality which has an injurious effect on health.

There should be study of comparative conditions in the world today to determine where remedial and preventive health work is most needed. This study should include statistics as to comparative infant mortality and death

rates of different localities, as affected by differences in incomes, occupations, medical and hospital facilities, opportunities for knowing and practising the laws of health. These facts may be presented by means of charts and descriptions that will appeal to the imagination.

A summary of conditions of modern life making for the improvement or impairment of health and affecting different groups will be in order.

The conditions in backward countries should be studied in some detail, with the help of the references given below.

The constructive effort being made all over the world should also be studied, especially the work of medical missions, famine relief, government and private agencies, and research.

It will be evident from this study that privileges are very unequally provided. Where can we find the motive for redressing these inequalities, if not in the spirit of Christ?

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MORE WEALTH

Purpose. To discover the ways in which poverty and the concentration of wealth are affecting mankind today, and the responsibility of the Christian church for constructive effort in this field.

Why is this a supreme issue?

Because so many individuals and nations suffer from the pressure of poverty, and because multitudes are subnormal in health for lack of the proper nutrition, medical care, and recreation which wealth would supply. Multitudes in the more backward nations are deprived of schooling because their governments are too poor to provide it for more than a fraction of the population; many others all over the world receive only the most elementary education because they must go to work as soon as they can. Poverty hampers freedom in that it separates races and classes and deprives them of many privileges which others enjoy. It hinders fellowship for the same reasons. In one sense poverty cannot impede the vision of God; in another it may prevent many experiences that would stimulate Christian growth.

We may sum up by saying that the majority of the world's population are living below what are considered normal standards, and that a very considerable part is habitually undernourished: indeed the bulk of mankind is intensely preoccupied with mere subsistence. Poverty often results in the stunting of physical, mental, moral and spiritual growth, leading to disease, vice, crime, superstition, illiteracy, social isolation or herding, inferiority complexes, class antagonism, and lack of spiritual stimu-

lus. On the other hand, great wealth often leads to indulgence, extravagance, luxury, unwholesome standards of living, fashions in dress which react harmfully on other classes, exaltation of profits, class prejudices, and callousness as to the lot of the less privileged.

Wealth has been defined as goods which satisfy human wants, are limited in supply, and are external to man. From these goods satisfactions flow. Income is this flow.

We should first note incomes in the United States and compare them with those in other countries (cf. *Incomes in the United States*, Mitchell, King, et al., ch. 2, especially 69-80, 81 ff.).

What should be the Christian attitude towards such a world situation?

Note how incomes are distributed in the United States (*Incomes in the United States*, ch. 3). In 1918-1919 the most prosperous one per cent of the population received fourteen per cent of the total income, and the most prosperous ten per cent received thirty-five per cent of the total income. In 1918 only fourteen per cent of persons gainfully employed were estimated to have incomes of two thousand dollars per annum, while eighty-six per cent had less (p. 146). Only one per cent received eight thousand dollars per annum or more (p. 147).

Some of the principal characteristics of present-day wealth production are power-driven machinery, specialization of labor, large-scale production, an intricate exchange mechanism including railroads, credit, middlemen, etc.; and competition based on the profit motive, the primary aim being to make money rather than to make goods.

Resulting disadvantages from this system are as follows: (1) specialized mechanical processes of manufacture, so that workers are mere machines; (2) inequalities of

opportunity for those without capital; (3) unemployment, especially severe in cycles of depression; (4) tremendous waste of industry in the exploitation of resources, advertising, useless middlemen, etc.; (5) complexity of modern organization, rendering correction of abuses difficult; (6) control of the profit motive which undertakes to sell goods rather than serve customers; (7) diversion of capital to luxuries rather than necessities; and (8) wild speculation.

These conditions will not solve themselves. While they demand prolonged study by experts, they demand also constant cooperation of men of goodwill. Christian people must very much more generally recognize their responsibility for the production of goods most necessary, with the primary motive of service; for distribution in the form of reasonable profits and just wages; for consumption in the form of the wise expenditure of money.

The study should begin with local conditions. Knowledge of the actual incomes on which some families are forced to live may create a new perspective. Typical situations in the United States should be taken up, and finally, those in other countries, especially those which are most oppressed by poverty. These last should be made real by appeals to the eye and the imagination—statistical charts, descriptions, narratives. The great rural problems of the Orient and Africa should be studied.

In this connection the subject of economic imperialism should receive special attention. Western capital, representing the product of power-driven machinery, applied science, and a highly developed credit system, seeks raw materials and new markets. In so doing it enters regions densely populated by poverty-stricken and illiterate populations who invite exploitation as cheap labor.

There should be a study of various forms of constructive social measures: labor legislation, organized philanthropy, vocational education, income and inheritance taxes, profit sharing, etc.

Great numbers of professing Christians, well disposed and anxious to do the right thing, are ignorant of the conditions that exist, convinced that things are as well as could be expected, borrowing their ideas and practice from tradition and from their own ill-informed social group. The church must stir itself to help these people to educate themselves. It must correct the noxious prejudices that our young people acquire all too soon, and try to create a social attitude worthy of the Christian name. The group should formulate specific plans along this line.

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SOUNDER KNOWLEDGE

Purpose. To discover how sounder knowledge may contribute to the welfare of all the world, and the responsibility of the church for promoting it.

Why is this a supreme issue?

Because education is so fundamental. All the other objectives that we are discussing—health, wealth, freedom, fellowship, vision—fail of their best realization unless they are promoted by educational methods. Consider the health and efficiency loss in the world today for lack of adequate knowledge of hygiene and sanitation, and of research for dealing with unconquered diseases; the economic loss due to lack of vocational education and guidance and of the scientific study of economic problems; the loss of freedom on account of social and economic ignorance, and the prejudice which an ideal education might remove; the loss of fellowship between races and classes due to the same causes; the loss in the vision of God because our religious education has been so inadequate.

When the word education is mentioned, most persons still think of something that goes on in schoolrooms and ends with commencement exercises and a diploma. Because this process recalls drudgery over tasks remote from life and soon forgotten, many regard it as a merely conventional preliminary to the real business of living. But in the first place, education is much broader than schooling. It begins before we enter school, and should continue as long as our mind can function. It comes through any channel which helps us to profit by our experiences. With-

out it we are cases of arrested development. The bulk of the mistakes in this world are made because people lack the training to manage their lives and to meet their responsibilities.

In the second place, all schools are not so poor as the ones we attended. During the last few decades educational theory has attracted some of our best thinkers, and their ideas are more and more being translated into practice. We have three types of schools: the traditional, which make only the changes that they must; the progressive, which welcome new ideas but are restricted by the demands of the large system of which they are a part; and the experimental, which are free to consider all ideas and any methods which may in their judgment promote the individual's development. The last two types are viewing education not as a mastery of formal facts and processes, but as the agency for helping to fulfil life's opportunities, present and future. There is a pretty general consensus of the leading educational writers that the following five headings would cover the principal objectives of education: physical health; vocational efficiency; wise use of leisure; effective social cooperation; moral and spiritual idealism. These points are differently arranged and worded by different writers.

Moreover, in these days when home and community life is often less educative than it should be, the school undertakes to make good its deficiencies. In localities where homes neglect physical oversight, the school provides lunches, medical examination, baths and dental care, etc. Since recreation facilities are often lacking, it stresses athletics, entertainments, clubs, etc. Since the intellectual atmosphere of the home is frequently listless, the school stimulates reading, debates, and hobbies. It is wrestling

with the difficult problems of vocational education on the one hand, and moral and religious education on the other. Persons whose own education was mainly old-fashioned and academic are surprised to learn of all the new ideas that have been thought out and put into practice in the last thirty years, and especially in the last fifteen.

Contrast the present educational opportunities with those of one hundred or even fifty years ago (cf. Moore, *Fifty Years of American Education*; Cubberley, *History of Education, Readings in the History of Education, Public Education in the United States, Changing Conceptions of Education*; Reisner, *Nationalism and Education Since 1789*; Kandel, *Twenty-five Years of American Education*). It will be apparent that the modern world is turning more and more to education as the main agency in social progress. But at the same time that the value of education is being more demonstrated and appreciated, there is no assurance that it is materially catching up with its job. New things to learn emerge faster than old things are mastered, so that in some respects the present generation is less competent to guide itself than the one that is past. This is especially true on the side of ideals and insights into our more complex problems. (Cf. *Middletown*, chs. 13-17, inclusive, and 27, for a picture of the sort of education which great multitudes of Americans are getting today; chs. 20-23, inclusive, for an estimate of how far we yet are from providing effective religious education.)

In this country the provision of educational facilities varies greatly in different regions (Finney, *A Sociological Philosophy of Education*, p. 516). Moreover, poverty or lack of leisure hinders many from taking the fullest advantage of the educational opportunities that exist. A comparison of local taxes and other expenditures for secular

education with the money spent on religious education may be interesting.

When we turn to the backward countries of the earth, we find on the one hand an appalling mass of poverty, illiteracy, and ignorance (cf. statistics in such references as the *Statesman's Year Book*, *World Almanac*, etc.), and on the other a great stirring of enthusiasm for education as a means of solving national problems. The study of the present educational situation in the Orient is a fascinating task. When in 1905 the yellow nation that had most conspicuously cultivated education, Japan, defeated the white nation that had most conspicuously neglected education, Russia, an electric thrill shot through the darker masses of mankind. Here was demonstrated that a tinted skin did not condemn people to a position of inferiority. By means of education they might beat the white race at their own game. Since that time Asiatic leaders have been keen for education. In many ways their problems are immensely greater and more complex than ours and deserve our most earnest Christian sympathy. Their health, wealth, freedom, fellowship, and vision are all largely dependent on the right sort of education.

On some such basis as this let the group determine the responsibility of the Christian church in promoting desirable forms of education in all the world, also practical projects that might be undertaken, and an educational program for the local church that will make them effective.

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LARGER FREEDOM

Purpose. To discover the limitations, social, economic and spiritual, under which people labor, and the responsibility of the church for knowing about them and helping to prevent or remove them.

Why is this issue important?

There is a greater demand for freedom on the part of individuals than ever before. The necessity of free choice for moral growth is recognized, but by many this doctrine is pushed to extremes. Self-expression is considered an end in itself; repressions are declared to be injurious. People value life for the kick they can get out of it.

Socially, there is a reaction against paternal authority, personal restrictions, class differences. We have a revolt of youth, impatience with social codes, demands for democratic treatment.

Economically, standards of living are rising, but this has always only increased discontent with conditions that seem unreasonable. Abnormal surroundings and clever advertising stimulate artificial wants. Labor demands larger recognition, and nations and classes resent the exploitation which their position invites.

Politically, enfranchisement has advanced rapidly in the last half century, so that it is being taken for granted as a right. Self-determination has become a universal ideal.

Religiously, the power of authority is waning. There is more appeal to individual judgment based on evidence and experience, and to an individual desire for the highest satisfactions.

This great tidal wave of human urge represents more than abnormal craving. It stands for impulses which Christianity has in some cases helped to create, and with which it must sympathize. Many are being cramped in their best development and opportunities for service today by the social, economic, political and spiritual barriers which have been created by status or circumstances and have resulted in limitations of health, social mobility and contacts, earning opportunities, and spiritual growth. These barriers may impede the individual either as an individual or as a member of a class, nation, or race. Social barriers are parental repression in the family, discrimination against women, class exclusiveness, race prejudice.

Economic barriers are those of individual poverty (which under our present system shut out poor people from many privileges), restrictions arising from modern business regulations and incident to the contests between capital and labor, economic discrimination against other races or classes, exploitation of them.

Political barriers are those of repression of political heterodoxy, race disfranchisement, restriction of immigration.

Spiritual barriers are those of intolerance, and segregation of denominations and of races.

Some of these barriers have a certain amount of justification. Some derive their standing mainly from inherited tradition, others from present urges. Freedom is not mere license, and those incapable of wise self-control may need restrictions; therefore some difficult problems arise. On the other hand, many of the present barriers are unnecessary. Those who have never been trained or permitted to exercise normal freedom are on the one hand permanently stunted, and on the other tempted to crude and

extreme reactions which lead to further loss. The evils of license are largely due to lack of that true freedom which involves self-control.

Study and personal investigation will reveal many illustrations of all this. Such study should include comparison of the conditions in which different classes and races live. The most severe burdens rest on the poor, especially on nations and races living under lower economic standards. Compare in detail the barriers encountered by a poor Negro boy and by the son of a wealthy and prominent family who has no greater individual ability.

Conditions of modern life are in many ways tending to remove the various barriers. In some cases, however, stress of competition is making them greater. In any event an enormous amount remains to be done.

The situation in backward countries needs special study. Conditions cannot be accurately estimated by the status of the progressive leaders, who form as yet only a tiny fraction of the population. How fast and under what circumstances can these nations abandon their race traditions? How can they obtain the capital necessary for economic development without subjecting themselves to exploitation?

Among constructive measures the work of the International Labor Office at Geneva should be noted. In attaining larger freedom, constructive education and not mere removal of restrictions will be necessary.

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CLOSER FELLOWSHIP

Purpose. To discover the implications of Christianity as bearing on the closer fellowship of all races, nations, and classes, and the responsibility of the church for leadership in this field.

This subject is closely connected with the preceding one. For practical purposes the division may be made between the negative and positive aspects of human intercourse. Under Larger Freedom we considered mainly the hindrances that need to be removed; under Closer Fellowship the constructive effort needed to bring people together. Even where no external barriers exist, our associations tend to become stereotyped and narrow. Many families are close corporations, and the same is true of social groups and vocational and church organizations. Prejudice of locality, nationality, class, or race keep apart people who might and should mingle. Moreover, fellowship will be necessary for the removal of barriers. Only as these are approached from both sides in a spirit of trust and cooperation can they be successfully attacked.

Among the types of fellowship that are needed are those based on residence, with neighbors and other members of the community; on vocation, with those in the same occupation or plant; on membership in an organization, with fellow members and other organizations; on church membership, with other churches and denominations; on national and international citizenship, with other classes, races, and nations.

The loss from lack of fellowship is less easily appre-

ciated than that from actual barriers, because people often suffer no discomfort from and may even find satisfaction in their isolation. But the loss is none the less real—possibilities of growth through enlarged interests, sympathies, exchange of ideas and friendships. Other lives lose the service that we might render them. The world loses the helpful results that can come only through cooperation. What is true of individuals is also true of groups of all sizes. Fellowship may expand possibilities in geometrical ratio. We can understand what is lost only as we study what has been gained through cooperation.

We need comparison of conditions in which different groups live. Those persons frequently have most fellowship who need it least. The privileged in other ways are likely to be privileged in this also. Those who have least to gain may have most to give and may gain most in giving. A study of the community will reveal instances of great disparity in fruitful fellowships. This difference will be still more marked throughout the nation and the world.

Especially conditions in backward countries indicate more acute needs. Other races have become exasperated at the superiority complex of the white race. Such incidents as those of Denshaw, Amritsar, Shanghai, and Nanking have increased the tension. The fact that some of these countries have internal antagonisms does not excuse an unsympathetic attitude on the part of Western peoples.

There are influences in modern life which render the situation more difficult. Race prejudice is more apparent than it was a few centuries ago. The recent revival of nationalism has given it reinforcement. Fear of lower economic standards intensifies the prejudice of the white

races, and fear of economic imperialism the prejudice of the colored.

The organizations, national and international, for promoting fellowship need our study and support. They furnish opportunities both for enlarging our personal contacts and for helping others by proxy whom we shall never meet. We all have responsibility for creating fellowship with all sorts and conditions of men. The best constructive service we can render may be with individuals.

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THE VISION OF GOD

Purpose. To discover what is involved in the vision of God, and how the church can help to realize it and transmit it more effectively.

What do we mean by the vision of God?

We cannot have a direct vision of God, who is invisible. If it would do us any good to have such a vision, God would become visible. But we can have in an increasing degree the vision of God in another sense, a sharing of his outlook, a fuller understanding of what he sees and how he sees it. By this we come to a comprehension of the most essential elements of God's character, his purpose and love for all mankind. The mere greatness and power of God without these would be only a cosmic and not a moral or spiritual revelation. The vision of God has most significance when it represents not looking at God, but looking with him and in his spirit at the world.

Why is this issue important?

Because if God's kingdom is to come and his will be done on earth, it must be through us. We are the lips and hands of God, on whom he is depending for the realization of his kingdom and the execution of his will. It is therefore absolutely essential that we should have this vision of the ideal kingdom and of the content of God's will, of the specific tasks and the hindrances. This is different from the view of Christianity which thinks of us as passive recipients of God's grace, vessels instead of channels, terminals instead of way stations. We are dependent on the grace of God for impulse and power, but

we profit by it only as we become its instruments in serving the world.

Note what the vision of God meant to the Hebrew prophets, to Christ, and to the apostles. It was a commission for service, a new vision of the world as God sees it. Study the things that seem to attract the special notice of God as set forth in the Bible, and observe how he regards them. Consider how the world must appear to God today, what things most arouse his approval and disapproval, what needs most excite his sympathy, in the success of what things he is most concerned. Persons whose vision and discriminations of these things is not keen have not truly a vision of God.

Seeing amounts to nothing unless we have norms and standards of values. What we see shows what we are. We tend to measure by our own limited experiences and the public opinion that surrounds us. We need a sense of perspective, of the dramatic (cf. Hankey, *A Student in Arms*, ch. 12), an idea of how the situation would look to an unprejudiced outsider. The ideal witness would be one whose knowledge was thorough, whose insight was keen, whose standard was high, and whose sympathy was deep. Through such qualities the vision of God is attained.

There is great loss to us all in that we lack this expert vision, in that we are not able to see our needs in true perspective from the highest standpoint, in that our aims terminate in better health, more wealth, etc., without our relating these ultimately to the kingdom of God. Health made an end in itself results in well-groomed animals finding their main satisfactions in physical enjoyments. Wealth made an end in itself results in complacency over economic prosperity. Knowledge made an end in itself results in mere erudition. Freedom made an end in itself makes

for license. Even fellowship misses its best without God's vision of what is most worthy to be exchanged among mankind.

Individuals without this vision will not be highly efficient. Many are content with innocuous commerce with God, something that will demand little and change them little. Great advances have followed every invention of superior optical instruments. A surgical operation that would confer keen vision on Christians would make a different world.

How are those without this vision to acquire it?

Try to estimate the relative opportunities which different groups in the community and nation have had in coming into personal contact with winsome examples of the depth and breadth of the sympathy of God. Study such cases as those mentioned by Mrs. Wembridge in *Other People's Daughters*. Consider the instances of practical spiritual starvation among those with large privileges. In view of this, would you call Christianity an efficient religion and the Christian church an efficient agency?

Consider conditions in backward countries. Although many types of Christianity have produced no fruits worthy of the vision of God, the Christian religion as a whole has been richer in this respect than have been the other religions of the world. Fruit-bearing as a result of fellowship with God is written into the constitution of Christianity as it is not into those of other faiths. Stanley Jones gives many testimonies from Hindus as to their lack of that first-hand consciousness of God which transforms the individual life. Christians who have attained the vision of God will have something to share. Those who have not will neither desire nor be able to share it.

Study cases of those of every race who have come into

the splendor of this vision, and have had their lives transformed by it. Note such books as :

Fraser : *The Autobiography of an African*.
Burton : *Notable Women of Modern China*.
Laubach : *Seven Thousand Emeralds*.
Axling : *Japan on the Upward Trail*.

REFERENCES

Much of the literature on the subject of this section concerns itself more with the mystical approach to God than with sharing his attitude towards the world. The importance of the latter is being increasingly recognized. All the references of the preceding sections bear on this latter aspect.

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APPENDIX

Suggestions to Sub-Committee Members on the Course, "Christianity's Supreme Issues"

Note. These *Suggestions* have been reprinted as a separate leaflet, and may be secured from the Missionary Education Movement, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City, at 25 cents per dozen, postpaid.

You are asked to join in a cooperative study of the responsibility of Christianity for the great human needs of the world. The plan has derived its original impetus from the great missionary conference held in Jerusalem in March, 1928, and more particularly from a book by Bishop Francis J. McConnell, *Human Needs and World Christianity*. Its six chapters are called "Better Health," "More Wealth," "Sounder Knowledge," "Larger Freedom," "Closer Fellowship," "The Vision of God." These represent the most important of human needs and as such are supreme issues for Christianity.

The aim of this study is to help our local church to face its Christian responsibilities for these world needs and in particular to adopt an educational program which shall prepare for continuous improvement along these lines.

The plan herewith presented is a result of considerable criticism and experimentation. Six sub-committees are being appointed, one in charge of each of the main topics mentioned above. You are asked to serve on Sub-Committee Number _____ for the special study of_____. The chairman of your committee is _____ who will call you together. If

you prefer membership on some other sub-committee, please notify your chairman as soon as possible and arrange for transfer. Each sub-committee will meet at least twice to prepare for a meeting of all the groups of which it will have charge. These general meetings will begin on _____. The date of the one which your group has in charge is _____.

It is suggested that the following four questions be made a general basis for study and for discussion in the general sessions. The study should be broad and practical in its outcome.

1. Why is this subject a supreme issue in the world at the present time? The answer to this may be presented in the form of a logical statement, of concrete narrative or description, or of statistical charts presented so as to bring out perspective.

2. To what extent is the Christian church in general and are we in particular responsible for meeting these needs?

3. How should we supplement the present educational program of our church in order to meet our responsibilities more effectively?

4. What specific projects can we undertake, local and worldwide?

The purpose of the first meeting of your sub-committee will be to discover what ideas and information are available, and to prepare for study. Each member will be assigned something to look up. At the second meeting more specific preparation will be made for effective discussion at the general sessions of the four questions stated above. It may be that an additional meeting of the group

will be found desirable in order to prepare for the general session.

The aim of the general session of which you have charge will be to create adequate convictions of the place your subject should have in the thought and educational program of the church, and to enrich your own thinking by the discussion.

After this meeting your group should continue to study and begin to prepare for specific educational projects in the church or community.

REFERENCES

The following references are suggested for members of the different groups, as furnishing an introduction to their respective subjects.

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Jerusalem Report, vol. IV, pp. 63 ff.; vol. V, pp. 23 and 73;
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McConnell, ch. 1.

MORE WEALTH

Roads to the City of God, ch. 6-7.
The World Mission of Christianity, chs. 6-7.
A Faith for the World, ch. 7.
Jerusalem Report, vol. IV, pp. 50 ff.; ch. 3; vol. V, especially
chs. 1, 3, 5, 6; vol. VI, especially chs. 4, 6, 10.
McConnell, ch. 2.

SOUNDER KNOWLEDGE

Roads to the City of God, ch. 8.
The World Mission of Christianity, ch. 2.
A Faith for the World, ch. 6.
Jerusalem Report, vol. II; vol. III, ch. 7; vol. IV, pp. 22, 38,
165; vol. V, p. 81; vol. VI, pp. 20, 40 ff., 151, 169, 197 ff., 248.
McConnell, ch. 3.

LARGER FREEDOM

Roads to the City of God, ch. 6.
The World Mission of Christianity, ch. 6.
A Faith for the World, ch. 7.

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McConnell, ch. 4.

CLOSER FELLOWSHIP

Roads to the City of God, chs. 4-5.
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THE VISION OF GOD

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